

A bill authored by Rep. Peter Welch to help veterans find work and receive job training was passed by the House Veterans' Affairs committee Wednesday.

The Military Transition Program (MTP) Act would create a pilot program partnering with businesses to fund on-the-job training for unemployed or underemployed veterans otherwise ineligible for training or education benefits.

On a recent congressional delegation trip to Afghanistan, Welch met with some of the 1,400 Vermont Guard members currently deployed to the region.

"Many of the Guardsmen and women I spoke with in Afghanistan are understandably anxious about their job prospects when they return to Vermont," Welch said. "As we prepare to welcome them home, we must do all we can to make sure they have job opportunities and training. This legislation will open up doors for Vermont Guard members and the many others across our country who have served so valiantly."

The Military Transition Program, which would be administered by the Department of Labor in coordination with the Department of Veterans' Affairs, would defray the costs of training by providing up to 50 percent of a veteran's wages during training. The Congressional Budget office estimates that the MTP pilot would provide 500 veterans a year the skills they need to compete.

The legislation will now be considered by the full House of Representatives.

Hear Welch speak about his time visiting Guard members in Afghanistan: